

February 13, 1997

TO: CALFED Policy Group

FROM: Lester A. Snow

SUBJECT: Purpose and Need Statement for the CALFED Bay-Delta Programmatic EIR/EIS

The Purpose and Need Statement is attached for your consideration and approval. The following are summaries and responses to comments received on the Purpose and Need Statement since the January 31, 1997, CALFED Management meeting. The comments resulted in two minor changes which are highlighted on pages 2 and 5 of the Purpose and Need Statement..

Department of Fish and Game

1. Using "Bay-Delta System" as the name for the Program's Geographic Problem Area could be confusing to readers because focus of the Problem Area is really the Delta and not the whole estuary.

Response:

We would agree that the term could lead to some misunderstanding. However, "Bay-Delta System" is found throughout all of the Program's products. In general when it is used, its focus is the Geographic Problem Area. The Program's mission statement is a good example. The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta System.

We suggest that "Bay-Delta System" continue to be used. Its use is mitigated by our defining what it means in the Purpose and Need Statement.

2. The fifth summarized Ecosystem Quality objective should be augmented.

Response:

Initially, the Purpose and Need Statement contained all of the objectives and sub-objectives listed in the report titled Problem/Objective Definition dated March, 1996. However, the descriptions in the Statement were switched from the more specific to the summaries because there was a concern by the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Environmental Protection Agency that the detailed listing of objectives and sub-objectives could unduly limit the range of alternatives.

The objective at issue is, "Increase population health and population size of Delta species to levels that assure sustained survival." The objective includes three sub-objectives. The fifth summarized objective in the Purpose and Need Statement mentions only one of the three, i.e., "Contribute to the recovery of threatened or endangered species and species of special concern." The other two sub-objectives; "Increase populations of economically important species" and "Increase populations of prey or food species" are not specifically listed because it was felt that they are embodied within the other four summarized objectives.

Suggest summary remains as written. The existing Purpose and Need Statement

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incorporates the previously mentioned report by reference and is available if the reader wants a more complete description.

US Army Corps of Engineers-Regulatory

Inquiry about whether or not meaning of "goal" which replaced "objective" in Purpose and Need statement changes intent. If "goal" now means that each alternative had to include each of the items identified in the Problem/Objective Definition report then that would unduly and improperly limit the range of alternatives that should be examined in determining the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative.

Response:

Meaning has not changed. Switch of terms was made to reflect more logical planning terminology hierarchy.

Office Of The Regional Solicitor

1. Replace "man" with "human", in the sentence "One early man-induced event... ."

Response:

Change made.

2. Add clarification as follows to Water Supply Reliability summarized objective number 4: "Reduce the vulnerability of Bay-Delta levees to breaching or over-topping or ?".

Response:

As noted in the response to the Department of Fish and Game's second question, earlier versions of the Purpose and Need Statement contained all of the objectives and sub-objectives listed in the report. However, the descriptions in the Statement were switched from the more specific to the summaries because there was a concern by the Corps and EPA that the detailed listing of objectives and sub-objectives would unduly narrow the range of alternatives.

Suggest summary remains as written. Clarity is provided under the System Integrity heading. Further, the existing Purpose and Need Statement incorporates the whole laundry list of objectives/sub-objectives by reference and is available if the reader wants a more complete description.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Add the following clarification to the description of the third-phase of the Program on page 2: "Because implementation of individual project components may cause changes throughout the system, detailed analysis of the interrelated and interdependent effects will be evaluated along with site specific direct effects."

Response:

It is our impression that identification of interrelated and interdependent effects are associated with biological assessments/opinions prepared in compliance with ESA. Therefore, in adding the Service's additions, we have added a clarification which ties the effort of identifying interrelated and interdependent effects to ESA.

402.02 Effects of the Action refers to direct and indirect effects of an action on the species or critical habitat, together with effects of other activities that are interrelated or interdependent with that action that will be added to the environmental baseline.

Cumulative — other ^{non-related} actions